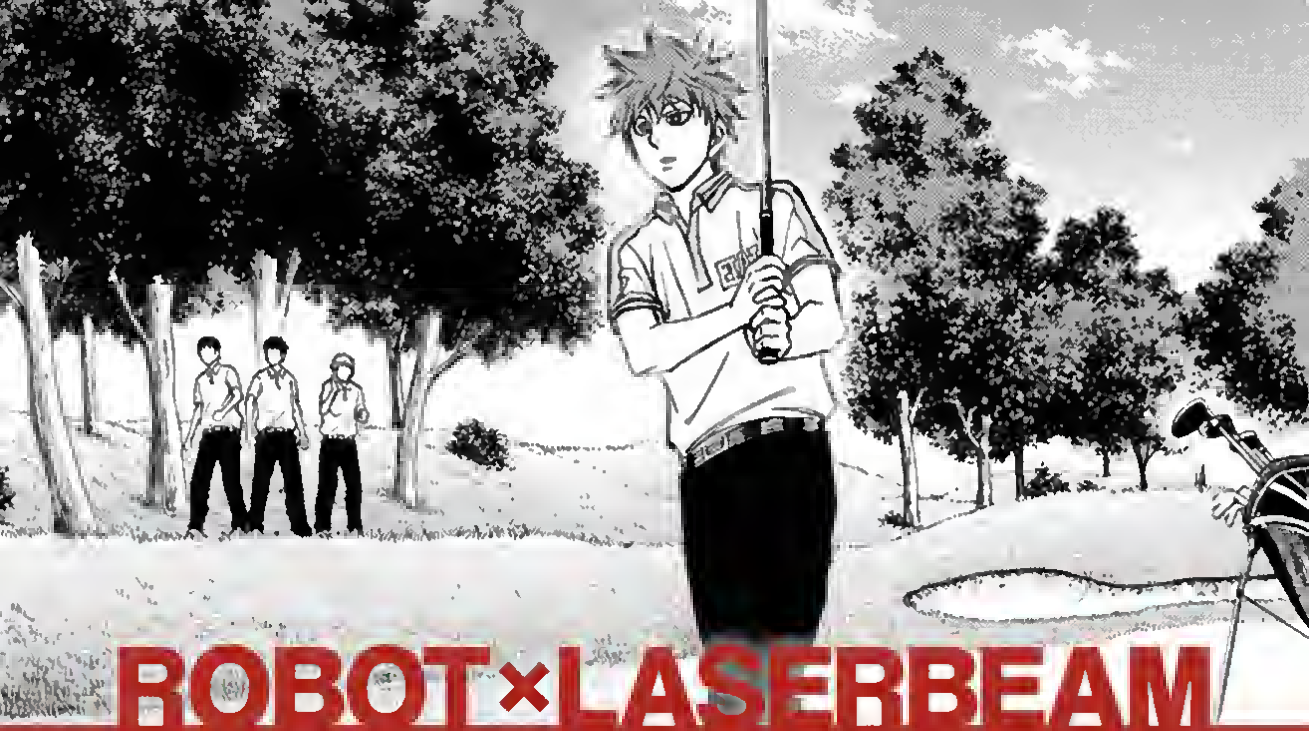


ROBOT×LASERBEAM

BY TADATOSHI FUJIMAKI

Robato Hatohara, a stupidly serious, creepily thorough and socially clueless high school boy, appears to have no interest in anything—including joining his friend Tomoya in the golf club. But when it's discovered that his perfect accuracy and calculations enable him to golf like a practiced professional, will he be able to escape playing golf?

PREVIOUSLY IN *ROBOT×LASERBEAM*:

After Robato Hatohara demonstrates his perfect swing, famous high school golfer Yozan Miura declares him to be his rival! But for their rivalry to actually grow, Robo needs to join the golf club and become a regular. A second-year student and regular, Rion Osanai, takes Robo under his wing to accomplish this goal and help him get a score of 70 before the training camp. Robo survives the athletic training for the team, but his score isn't good enough to compete in the training camp. But then Kyosuke Suzaku, a.k.a. "the Emperor," appears and challenges Robo to play against him in the practice match! The match begins, and Robo is losing by only a little. But then Suzaku hits his ball into a seemingly impossible-to-recover spot, only to make a perfect lob shot right into the hole!

ROBOTX LASERBEAM

Round 17: Powerful Rival

TWIST
FIRST, OPEN UP THE CLUBFACE SO THAT IT'S FACING STRAIGHT UP.
KEEP YOUR STANCE OPEN...
...THEN SWING AS WIDE AS YOUR STANCE.
WOOSH
SWISH
YOU'RE NOT SO MUCH HITTING THE BALL AS PASSING THE CLUB BETWEEN THE BALL AND THE GROUND.

AND THERE YOU HAVE IT. THE LOB SHOT.
OOOH!
TUMP
TUMP
ROBO... IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO DO NOW EVEN FOR YOU.
...
I've still barely got it down myself.
BUT IT'S TRICKY.
IT'S A TECHNIQUE YOU USE WHEN THE PIN IS CLOSE BUT YOU CAN'T ROLL THE BALL TO IT.
IN SHORT, YOU CAN'T MASTER IT YET.
IF YOU EVER FIND YOURSELF IN A SITUATION WHERE YOU NEED IT, DON'T EVEN TRY TO GET THE BALL NEAR THE PIN.
SOMETIMES NOT DOING WHAT YOU KNOW YOU CAN'T DO IS THE RIGHT THING.
THE HEIGHT OF THE BALL AND THE WAY THE BALL ROLLS AFTER IT FALLS CHANGES DEPENDING ON HOW OPEN THE CLUBFACE IS AND THE BREADTH OF THE SWING.
THAT ONLY COMES WITH EXPERIENCE AND PRACTICE.
IF IT WERE ONLY ABOUT HITTING THE BALL, YOU'D HAVE IT DOWN IN NO TIME.
BUT THE PROBLEM IS YOUR SENSE OF DISTANCE.

WAAAAH!
WHOA! ARE YOU KIDDING ME?!
HE GOT A CHIP-IN BIRDIE FROM THAT SPOT?!
GUH ...

AAH...
I COULD NEVER HIT THE BALL THAT HIGH AND CONTROL THE DISTANCE.
IT'S JUST AS RION SENPAI SAID.
ROBO WON'T EVEN GET A BIRDIE!
HE MISSED ...!
TONI
HEY ...
SLOW DOWN. DON'T YOU WANT TO RESET YOURSELF?
It's still a meter away.
MUR
MURアー!!
アー!!
...
I'M GOING TO HIT FIRST.

HOLE	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL
PAR	4	3	5	4	4	
Robo	4	4	5	4	5	+2
Suzaku	4	3	5	4	3	-1

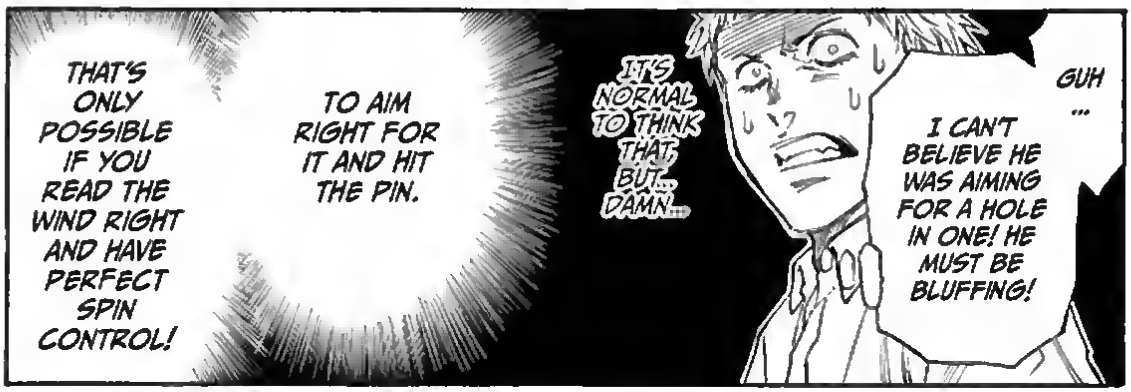
...
CRAP... UNTIL NOW, HE WAS TOTALLY IN A GOOD POSITION.
WHAT'S HE DOING? THIS WASN'T JUST A SLIPUP. HE TOTALLY BOTCHED IT.
IT'S THINGS LIKE THIS THAT MAKE GOLF SO SCARY!

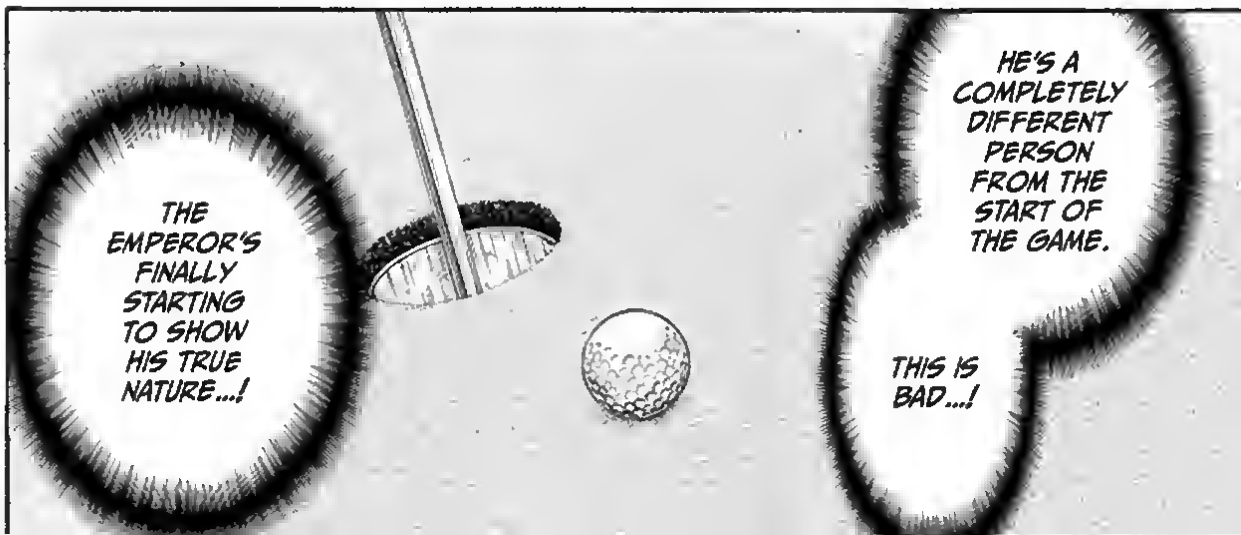
6th Hole
Par 3
169 Yards
THOK

IT'S HEADED STRAIGHT FOR THE PIN!
WOOSH
ヒュウウ...
ZWOOM
ギギ...
WURL
GOOD ...
RIGHT THERE.

KLAK
WHOOSH
THUMP
WOOOW
GAH ?!
WHOA! THAT WAS NEARLY A HOLE IN ONE!
IT HIT THE PIN!

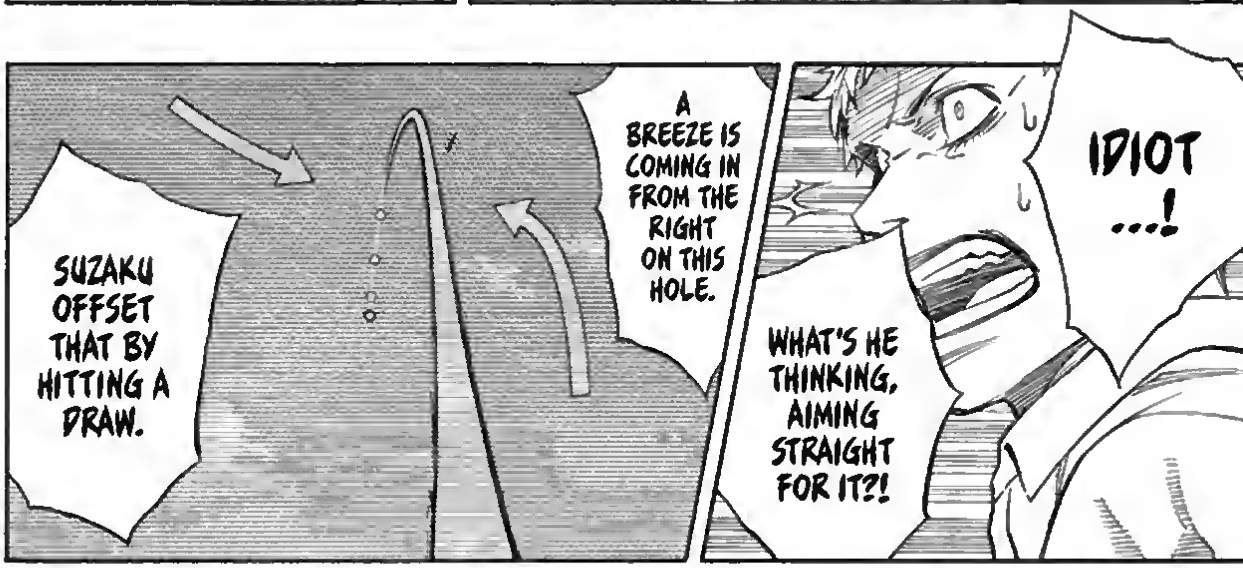
WHAT ...?
I AIMED FOR IT, BUT...
...IT DIDN'T GO IN.


GUH ...
I CAN'T BELIEVE HE WAS AIMING FOR A HOLE IN ONE! HE MUST BE BLUFFING!
IT'S NORMAL TO THINK THAT, BUT... DAMN...
TO AIM RIGHT FOR IT AND HIT THE PIN.
THAT'S ONLY POSSIBLE IF YOU READ THE WIND RIGHT AND HAVE PERFECT SPIN CONTROL!


HE'S A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT PERSON FROM THE START OF THE GAME.
THIS IS BAD...!
THE EMPEROR'S FINALLY STARTING TO SHOW HIS TRUE NATURE...!

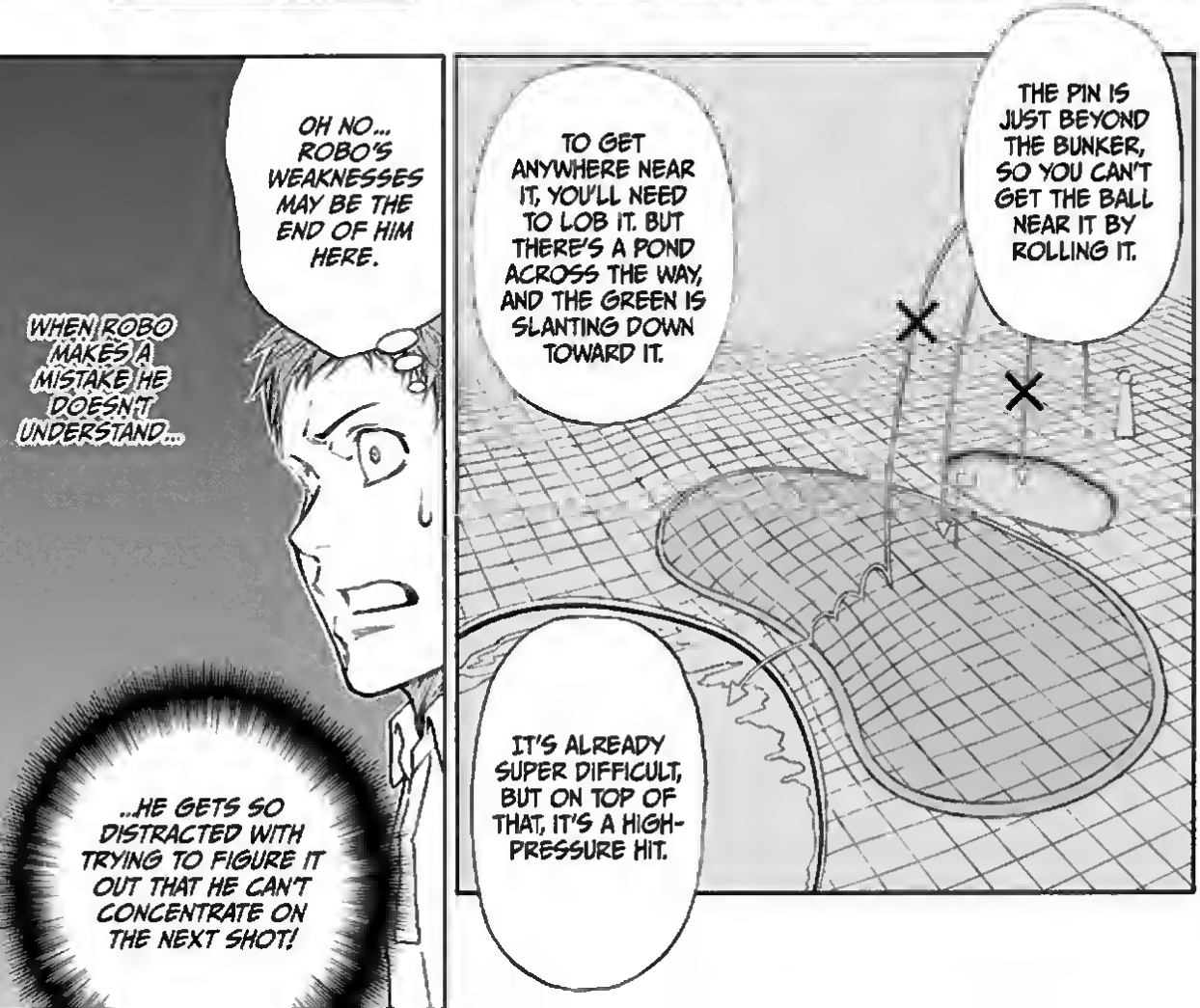
DUDE. EARTH TO ROBO.
IT'S YOUR TURN.
MUR
MUR
SWF
HUH ...?
OH.
AH.
SORRY.

THERE IT IS! THE LASER BEAM!
IT'S HEADED RIGHT FOR THE PIN!!
THOK


A BREEZE IS COMING IN FROM THE RIGHT ON THIS HOLE.
SUZAKU OFFSET THAT BY HITTING A DRAW.
IDIOT ...!
WHAT'S HE THINKING, AIMING STRAIGHT FOR IT?!

WURL
WOOSH

RIGHT OF THE BUNKER.
THAT'S THE WORST POSITION.
...
THUMP

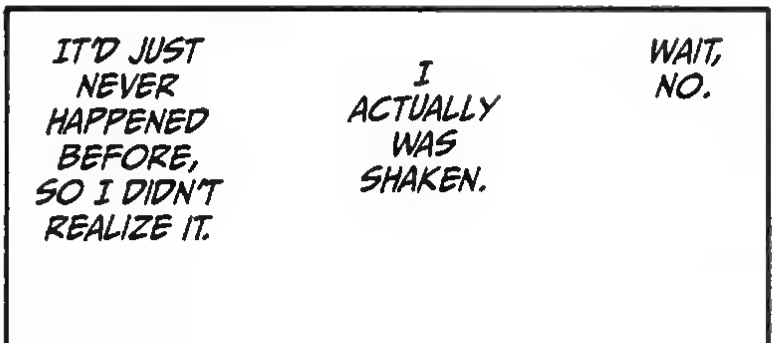

OH NO... ROBO'S WEAKNESSES MAY BE THE END OF HIM HERE.
WHEN ROBO MAKES A MISTAKE HE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND...
...HE GETS SO DISTRACTED WITH TRYING TO FIGURE IT OUT THAT HE CAN'T CONCENTRATE ON THE NEXT SHOT!
TO GET ANYWHERE NEAR IT, YOU'LL NEED TO LOB IT. BUT THERE'S A POND ACROSS THE WAY, AND THE GREEN IS SLANTING DOWN TOWARD IT.
THE PIN IS JUST BEYOND THE BUNKER, SO YOU CAN'T GET THE BALL NEAR IT BY ROLLING IT.
IT'S ALREADY SUPER DIFFICULT, BUT ON TOP OF THAT, IT'S A HIGH-PRESSURE HIT.

MUR 7"
MUR 7"
MUR 7"...
But since I went first...
I three-putt it...

PLEASE, ROBO!! GET BACK WITH THE PROGRAM!
WHICH MEANS HE'LL PROBABLY MESS UP ON SOME WAY IN HIS NEXT APPROACH.

YOU'VE BEEN WEIRD EVER SINCE SUZAKU MADE HIS CHIP-IN BIRDIE! ARE YOU ALL SHOOK UP FROM IT?!
THAT WAS A STUPID JUDGMENT CALL!
HUH?
COME ON, ROBO!
WHAT THE HELL KIND OF SHOT WAS THAT?!

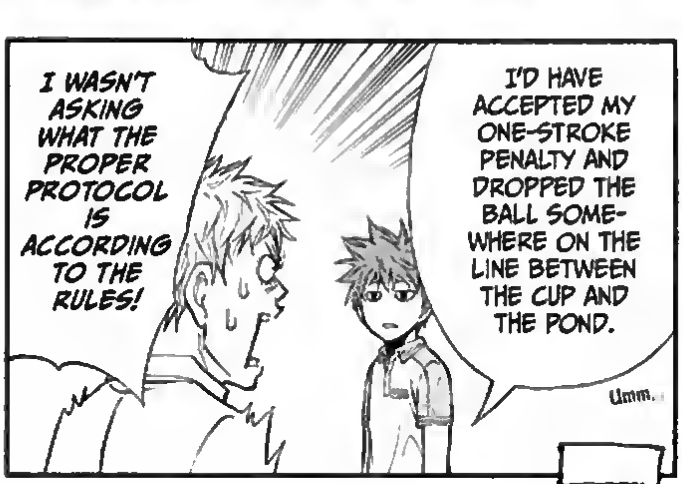
SHOOK UP?
WHY SHOULD I LOSE MY COOL FROM WATCHING OTHERS' SHOTS?
...

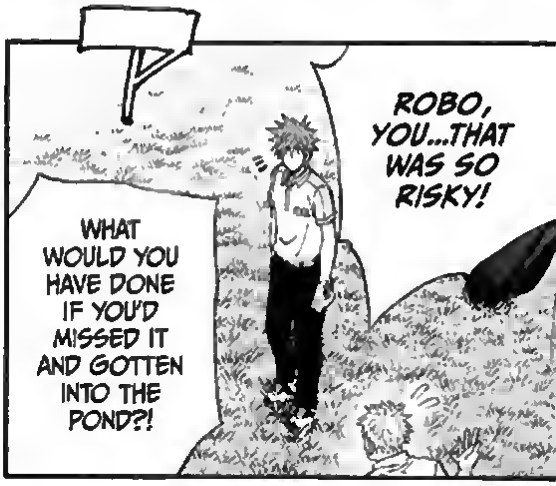

IT'D JUST NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE, SO I DIDN'T REALIZE IT.
I ACTUALLY WAS SHAKEN.
WAIT, NO.

HUH ...?
THANKS FOR TELLING ME.
OH YEAH. THAT'S IT.
FOCUSING TOO INTENSELY ON WINNING. I'M GETTING ALL SORTS OF EMOTIONS, AND ALL SORTS OF THINGS ARE HAPPENING FROM IT.
MAKING NEGLIGENT PUTTS.
HITTING THE DRIVER HARDER THAN USUAL.
SOMETIMES NOT DOING WHAT YOU KNOW YOU CAN'T DO IS THE RIGHT THING.
IF YOU EVER FIND YOURSELF IN A SITUATION WHERE YOU NEED IT, DON'T EVEN TRY TO GET THE BALL NEAR THE PIN.
NOW WHAT SHOULD I DO...?
IF IT ROLLS, IT'LL MISS.
AND I CAN'T MAKE A LOB SHOT LIKE SUZAKU-SAN.
DO YOUR BEST.
I'LL JUST DO WHAT I CAN.
OKAY!

KLAK
カリコリ
...?!
HE'S FACING THE PIN?!
BUT THAT'S NOT A LOB STANCE!
DON'T TELL ME...
EVEN IF IT'S ONLY 20 YARDS AWAY...IF HE'S OFF BY EVEN A FEW CENTIMETERS, THERE'S A 100 PERCENT CHANCE IT'LL ROLL RIGHT INTO THE POND!
HE ISN'T AFRAID OF THAT?!
HIS LEVEL-HEADEDNESS ISN'T NORMAL!
...HE'S AIMING STRAIGHT FOR THE HOLE?!
"I" TUMP

NAAAAH
THE FACT THAT HE HIT THE PIN IS PRETTY DARN GOOD ALREADY... BUT IF HE'D BEEN OFF EVEN A BIT, HE'D HAVE GOTTEN A TON OF STROKES ON THIS HOLE!
WAH?! WHAT'S HE THINKING?!
AH.
I missed.


I WASN'T ASKING WHAT THE PROPER PROTOCOL IS ACCORDING TO THE RULES!
I'D HAVE ACCEPTED MY ONE-STROKE PENALTY AND DROPPED THE BALL SOMEWHERE ON THE LINE BETWEEN THE CUP AND THE POND.
Umm...


ROBO, YOU...THAT WAS SO RISKY!
WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE DONE IF YOU'D MISSED IT AND GOTTEN INTO THE POND?!

IF I'D FAILED, I'D HAVE MERELY WRITTEN IT OFF AS SOMETHING THAT COULDN'T BE HELPED.
NORMALLY SOMEONE WOULD'VE BEEN AFRAID OF FAILURE!

I CAN'T GIVE HIM PROPS FOR HIS OVERLY AGGRESSIVE STYLE, BUT HIS POWER OF CONCENTRATION IS MAGNIFICENT
LOOKS LIKE THERE'S STILL FUN TO BE HAD.

AND ANYWAY, EVEN IF I FAIL...
...I STILL HAVE MY SENPAI BEHIND ME.
WAH HA HA!
THAT JUNIOR IS SO RECK-LESS!
はーっ...
GEEZ...
WE TOLD HIM TO GIVE IT HIS ALL, BUT HE'S GIVING TOO MUCH.
SHVR
STILL, SEEING THAT FROM MY JUNIOR...
...GETS ME ALL FIRED UP.
TO BE CONTINUED...